

# PEOPLE - CUSHMAN

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## The Clipper Visits Lura Cushman

BY NANCY MCCAFFERTY

Like her ancestors, Lura Cushman's life is intertwined with the sea and Duxbury. Born in her grandfather David Cushman Jr.'s house off St. George St., she grew up surrounded by history and seafaring tradition. Her parents, Walter Cushman and Lucie Hall, kept the house in the family and passed it on to Lura.

The rooms are a monument to past voyages and Lura's own quixotic wanderings around the world. Paintings of her grandfather's ships, sailing in fair and foul weather, adorn the walls and lure the imagination into an earlier time steeped in legend, folklore and verified annals of adventure. The "Kingfisher," the "Roschius," and a portrait of the "Hebe" heading into snynna in 1851 recall the family's inextinguishable link with the tides. Her grandfather kept an artist on board to record otherwise lost moments of history. There is the carefully preserved log book of the "Lagoda" written in her grandfather's hand. The New Bedford Whaling museum features a model of the "Lagoda" giving visitors the opportunity to judge as nearly as possible today what life aboard the old vessels must have been.

"I wish I could have been alive when my grandfather was and have gone to sea with him," said Lura. She has nearly duplicated his voyages, traveling to most of the ports to which he sailed in bygone days. Places connected with the China trade, islands where few white men dared to go, ports of call in the newly explored and remote areas of the world where courageous captains tested the strength of their men and their ships. The teeming cities of the Orient, the grand commercial and cultural centers of Europe, the southern capes of Africa and South America where explosive storms and clever adversaries demanded an accounting of brains and

remember the racing in the winter on snow covered grounds where the first prize was a sack of grain. There were scrubby oak trees brought from England on the shores of Powder Point, most of which meet their doom through exposure to salt water, winter kill, and the storms lashing the weakened trunks. There were no houses on Powder Point except that of the American Counsel near the lighthouse.

Lura went to the Point School and Miss Bessie Green was her teacher. She was one of 10 students graduated from Partridge Academy in 1914. She remembers the portrait of George Partridge hanging on a wall behind the principal's desk which has found its resting place above the mantle of the King Caesar House. Framingham State Teachers' College was the next educational berth. She spent the World War I years there. "We used to eat bread products made of dark flour and saved the white flour to send to the men overseas. At that time, everyone thought the white flour was the best, not realizing that dark flour is really more nutritious." She graduated in 1918 and went to work as assistant manager of a cooking establishment in Cordage Park, Plymouth. She returned to Framingham in 1922 and taught for over a year.

It was then she slipped her moorings and left Duxbury to become a teacher at the Fanny Farmer School of Cookery in Boston. (The school is in no way connected to the candy company.) It was the school's staff who tested recipes, determined the amount of each ingredient added to accommodate a specific number of servings, cooked dishes and adjusted them before entering the most satisfying combination in cookbooks. However, Lura never really said good-bye to Duxbury. She returned every summer and many weekends to her parent's home. She rented apartments in Boston only for the duration of the school year. "I came back to Duxbury because this is my home. Boston was too far away to be going back and forth everyday. (This was pre-expressway time.) I stayed in Boston only for the time I had to be there," said Lura.

When her mother became ill, Lura resigned her teaching post to take care of her. She was reinstated at Framingham for a time and upon retirement, returned to Duxbury permanently. The town had

current members of the Art Association, however, membership is open to all.

Grafters may reserve table space of 3 feet or 6 feet, or equivalent wall space, or choose to display in the Boutique area with shared space and responsibility. One table will be available for the combined use of community organizations.

If you would like a reservation form or more information about the craft fair and about fees and commissions to be charged contact Marta Hartwell at 934-6610. Deadline for reservations is Nov. 26.

### Children's Classes

Jill Karlin who has been holding the popular DAA children's classes at Drew House will hold the next class on Saturday, Nov. 8. This will be the last November class, Dec. 6 and 13 being the next classes.

Congratulations to Jill, who is opening a show of her oil paintings, "Mostly Vermont" at the Chestnut Hill Cinema Gallery on route 9 in Chestnut Hill. The show will run from Nov. 16 through Jan. 15, with an opening reception on Sunday, Nov. 16 from 11 to 1.

set down in a bookcase by a living room door. She has friends and acquaintances from England to Japan, from Australia to Norway. Snapshots and mementoes have been placed here and there to remind her at a glance of where the heaving waves have carried her. Manila, Samoa, Penang, Madagascar, Singapore, Malta, Seoul, the Canary Islands, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Formosa as well as European, South American and African nations. She has visited the gold and silver markets of Ecuador, held a koala bear in Australia, waved to Princess Margaret in Edinburgh, attended the Passion Play in St. Moritz, and watched as copra was being ground into soap and coconut oil.

Lura always travelled by ship, as one might expect of the niece of Duxburyite Captain Parker Hall, but rarely used passenger liners. She preferred freighters. Their schedules were looser, their ports more diverse, and it gave her the opportunity to see how a working ship operates. Passengers aboard the freighters were limited to 12 as the law requires a doctor present if the number goes higher. Time spent in ports varied according to the weather. Much cargo is packed in heavy cardboard boxes and if it is raining, items such as cigarettes cannot be loaded or unloaded because of possible damage.

"The first trip in 1960 took me around the world and I had such a good time I did it again the next year," said Lura. "I like to see how people live, the type of food. It's fun to go into a restaurant and order something I've never seen or heard of before. I particularly like islands. They fascinate me. People can do so much in a small area. I've enjoyed all of it. The rural parts of England haven't changed very much. The land is just like it was in the stories I read as a child."

She took a few precautions with the food and water of unfamiliar lands. "If I ever had any doubt about the water, I would simply wait until I got back on the ship or drink tea (boiled water). I wouldn't eat raw vegetables although anything which could be peeled was all right." Lura never had any problems in adapting. She has a great curiosity which demanded satisfaction.

She was born Oct. 1, 1895, at the Anchorage, the name her Grandfather Cushman christened the house he commissioned to be built while he was at sea. The road turning toward the house had one large home on the corner and a row of carriage houses facing the Blue Fish River sheltered by breaks of evergreens. The old wooden bridge over the river which had been constructed draw-bridge fashion to allow passage to and from the shipyards, was replaced with the present stone structure. The William Wright family still owned the land on which Duxbury High School was built. The Wrights, by the way, had the first indoor bathroom in Duxbury, the Cushmans, the second. Onion Hill was a race track surrounded by meadows and colt barn and Lura can

into ships. Lura goes quietly and gracefully under full sail, truly a grande dame of the sea.